

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRETOR 03673 261509Z

44

ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SSO-00 IO-03 SP-02

L-01 INR-05 INRE-00 CIAE-00 CCO-00 PRS-01 /036 W

----- 006647

O R 261424Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2801

INFO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3673

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, RH, SF,&74, ZA

SUBJ: GRZ SUGGESTION THAT US APPROACH SMITH AND ANC

REF: (A) STATE 227224 (NOTAL) (B) LUSAKA 1811; (C) LUSAKA 1865

1. REGRET DELAY IN RESPONDING TO REFTEL (A), BUT DUE TO CIRCUIT PROBLEMS IT WAS NOT RECEIVED IN PRETORIA UNTIL MORNING SEPT 26.

2. IN CONVERSATION WITH DFA SECRETARY BRAND FOURIE ON SEPT 25, I EXPLORED SAG THINKING ON NEXT STEPS IN RHODESIAN SITUATION. FOURIE SAID THAT PM VORSTER HAD DECIDED TO TAKE NO FURTHER ACTION WITH RESPECT TO IAN SMITH UNTIL AFTER RHODESIAN FRONT CONGRESS NOW IN SESSION AND ANC CONGRESS CONVOKED BY NKOMO FOR THIS WEEKEND. NOT UNTIL RESULTS OF THESE TWO KEY MEETINGS ARE KNOWN CAN ANY DECISION BE REACHED ON WHAT STEPS MIGHT BE EFFECTIVE.

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PAGE 02 PRETOR 03673 261509Z

EM I ASKED FOURIE HOW HE ASSESSED THE CHANCES OF

PATCHING UP THE ANC LEADERSHIP DIFFERENCES IN ORDER TO RESUME THE VICTORIA FALLS TALKS. HE THOUGHT THE PROSPECTS HIGHLY UNLIKELY. I THEN ASKED FOR HIS VIEWS ON (A) SMITH'S RECENT STATEMENTS ABOUT BLACK-WHITE POWER SHARING, (B) NKOMO'S FOLLOWING INSIDE RHODESIA, (C) NKOMO'S ABILITY TO OBTAIN STRONG ANC BACKING AT THE FORTHCOMING CONGRESS, AND (D) THE DISPOSITION OF THE FOUR PRESIDENTS TO ACCEPT A NKOMO-SMITH NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, ASSUMING IT RESULTED IN MAJORITY RULE OR MEANINGFUL POWER SHARING IN A REASONABLE TIME PERIOD. ON SMITH'S STATEMENTS FOURIE SAID THESE MUST BE WEIGHED AGAINST THE PRONOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS OF THE RF CONGRESS. HE PREFACED HIS RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONS OF NKOMO'S STANDING BY SAYING SAG WAS HESITANT IN MAKING ASSESSMENTS ABOUT THE RELATIVE STRENGTH OF ANC LEADERS AS SAG HAD NO DIRECT CONTACTS WITH THEM. DIVISION OF LABOR IN FURTHERING RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT WAS FOR SAG TO WORK ON SMITH AND PRESIDENT KAUNDA AND ASSOCIATES TO HANDLE ANC. IMPRESSION SAG HAS FROM KAUNDA IS THAT NKOMO HAS STRONG FOLLOWING INSIDE RHODESIA AND THAT THE IS NOT RPT NOT A SMITH "STOOGES." HOW SUCCESSFUL NKOMO WILL BE AT THIS WEEKEND'S CONGRESS SHN ACHIEVING A DEMONSTRABLY CONVINCING SHOW OF SUPPORT IS ANOTHER MATTER. FOURIE SAID HE HAD NO WAY TO PREDICT THIS. FOURIE WAS ESPECIALLY CAUTIOUS ON QUESTION (D) BUT SAID THAT IN CONVERSATIONS WITH ZAMBIANS HE DETECTED A NUANCE THAT A NKOMO-SMITH SETTLEMENT MIGHT BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE FOUR PRESIDENTS. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION WHERE HE FOUND THE NUANCE, FOURIE REPLIED IN THE REPEATED REFERENCE BY THE ZAMBIANS THAT SINCE THE ANC LEADERSHIP IS SO HOPELESSLY DIVIDED, THE SOLUTION WILL HAVE TO COME FROM THE ANC INSIDE RPT INSIDE RHODESIA.

4. I AGREE WITH AMBASSADOR WILKOWSKI THAT WE SHOULD SIT TIGHT UNTIL AFTER THE RESULTS OF THE TWO CONGRESSES ARE KNOWN. THEN WE CAN DECIDE WHETHER IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO APPROACH PM VORSTER AND THE NATURE OF THE APPROACH.
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PAGE 03 PRETOR 03673 261509Z

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, CHIEFS OF STATE MEETINGS, REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PRETOR03673
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750334-0930
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750910/aaaaaijn.tel
Line Count: 107
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 STATE 227224, 75 LUSAKA 1865
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <05 NOV 2003 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GRZ SUGGESTION THAT US APPROACH SMITH AND ANC
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, RH, SF, ZA, ANC, (SMITH, IAN), (FOURIE, BRAND), (VORSTER, BALTHAZAR J)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006